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ABSTRACT

There are two contemporary urban reform thrusts working in parallel, one being the move toward coordinated children's services through the public schools (full-service schooling), and the other a press toward the economic and social regeneration of poor neighborhoods. The interest in a much-broadened mission for the public school (toward coordinated children's and family services) has captured attention in American communities nationwide, and the approach is being tested with varying combinations of public and private funding. The services provided by any given project can greatly differ, and projects can vary in their exact locations, from school-based, to school-linked, to community-based. However, it is not unusual for coordinated service efforts to include health clinics and health education, family-assistance/support, family counseling, adult education, parenting education, child care, and youth/family recreation. An alternative paradigm that focuses on community development rather than delivery of services is gaining considerable attention. When these approaches are considered, the choice should not be which way to go, but rather how to manage both. Ideas of importance are: (1) added assistance to families and children, while vital, can fail to reach if the full involvement of parents and the community is not a simultaneous goal; (2) the local school should be recognized as a part of the basic industry of the city, with economic and community-development responsibilities that go well beyond mere delivery of services; and (3) powerful neighborhood revitalization strategies should proceed from the realization that in poor neighborhoods physical, economic, and social, individual and collective, adult and child well-being are all interconnected. (Contains 54 references.) (SLD)

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Laboratory for Student Success

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The research report herein was supported in part by the National Center on Education in the Inner Cities at the Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education (CRHDE), and in part by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) of the U.S. Department of Education through a contract to the Laboratory for Student Success (LSS) established at CRHDE. The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position of the supporting agencies, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

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Neighborhood Initiatives, Community Agencies, and the Public Schools: A Changing Scene for the Development and Learning of Children

William L. Boyd, Robert L. Crowson, and Aaron Gresson

A malnourished or hungry child cannot learn. A child with no coat or head-covering amid winter's chill may be defenseless against the germs flourishing in his or her overcrowded classroom. A child never examined for poor eyesight, never vaccinated, and never offered a dental checkup may be doomed to academic failure. A child of poverty may require society's care and the fulfillment of some basic human needs as a precondition to any successful encounter with the 3R's.

These were the insights of educators a century ago. A key innovation, a true reform, in public education was the recognition in Progressive-era America that lunches and even breakfasts, school nurses, medical and dental inspections, social workers, regular clothing drives, and guidance counselors may be vital components of successful schooling. Such additions of service were not without difficulty, for many early-in-the-century neighborhoods were distrustful of the motives of those who were medically "inspecting" their children. However, the notion of the public school as a center of not-just-pedagogical offerings to its community has a long and rich history (Tyack, 1992).

This rich history has today achieved new vitality—in a movement toward a much-enhanced (and even a service-coordinated) use of the public school as the center of "outreach" to children and families. The notion of the "full-service school" (Dryfoos, 1994) brings a renewed recognition of interdependencies between the development and learning of children, and the health of schools/families/communities (Crowson & Boyd, 1993). Today's recognition is that the "social capital" found in strong homes and strong communities can play a necessary role in children's learning—and it thus behooves the public school to try to reach out, and indeed to "invest" in the creation of such vitalities in their own neighborhoods. The "school's very capacity to educate children," claimed sociologist James Coleman (1994, p. 34), requires that it "function in a way that strengthens communities and builds parental involvement with children."

Beyond the school, there are also special, parallel efforts now that draw on deep turn-of-the-century traditions to "strengthen communities." A settlement-house movement in Progressive-era America believed that the restoration of "social organization" and of "order" to neighborhoods (amid the economic and social chaos of their direst-poverty conditions) could serve residents as a key stepping-stone into the labor market and toward social mobility

(Halpern, 1995). The settlement houses also provided services—a wide array of them, from nurseries and day-care centers, to employment assistance, to libraries and reading rooms, to free medical clinics, to "classes" by the score for parents and their children (Philpott, 1978). "Progressive reformers tended to believe," writes Robert Halpern (1995, p. 29), "that the best way to help integrate poor neighborhoods and their residents into the larger society was to first strengthen these neighborhoods and then try to link them to the outside world."

Strengthening neighborhoods and "linking them" constitutes a second "movement" with new, modern-day vitality. There has been a renewed, nationwide attention focused on neighborhood revitalization, tackling economic issues and the "empowerment" of poor communities as a societal priority. Much of the thrust for this movement comes from the July, 1995 publication of President Clinton's National Urban Policy Report. Entitled "Empowerment: A New Covenant with America's Communities," this report offers the nation a "Community Empowerment Agenda" focusing upon family self-sufficiency and independence through employment, a renewed encouragement of private investment in urban communities, and a locally or "grassroots" driven strategy of action. The Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) initiative (as this movement is labeled) seeks to generate "strategies for change that combine innovative economic development initiatives with essential human capital and community building investments" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1995, p. 44).

Thus, interestingly, we have two contemporary urban-reform thrusts, in parallel, both with deep and even common historical roots: the press toward coordinated children's services (full-service schooling) in public education, on the one hand; and the press toward an economic and social regeneration of poor neighborhoods on the other. Each of these movements promises to be comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrative. However, Deborah Cohen (1995, p. 36) has observed, public schools "have seldom played more than a bit part" thus far in neighborhood revitalization. What might be some key differences in assumption, structure, action, and impact between them? What are the implications of one movement for the other? Just how compatible is urban school reform with the revitalization thrust? How well could revitalization and "empowerment" blend into the work of the public school? What are the potentialities in these simultaneous movements for "a changing scene" around the development and learning of children?

Coordinated Services Initiatives

A renewed interest in a much-broadened mission for the public school—toward coordinated children's and family services—has captured considerable attention among American communities nationwide. Experimentation is under way at multiple sites in nearly every state in the nation, with varying combinations of public and private (philanthropic) funding. The "services" provided by any given project can vary widely, and projects can vary in their exact locations, from school-based, to school-linked, to community-based. However, it is not unusual for coordinated services efforts to typically include health clinics and health education, family-assistance/support, family counseling, adult education, parenting education, child care, and youth/family recreation (see Driscoll, Boyd, & Crowson, 1996a).

Intellectual support for coordinated services initiatives is derived from three basic understandings. First, the services movement has coincided with a firm appreciation and understanding of that which John Goodlad (1987) has labeled "the new ecology of schooling." The realization here among the proponents of coordination is that school, family, and community are vitally interdependent and that the development and learning of children depend heavily upon the many supports available to them in their neighborhood environments (see, Comer, 1980). Enhancing parental involvement in the learning process, collaboration and "sharing" between families and educators, and a much closer attentiveness to the home on the part of educators are all elements of a new ecological sense of learning connections (Epstein, 1988, 1990). These, along with an array of other supports and services (e.g., health and recreation services, good housing, community development, libraries) form "a network of learning environments" (Fantini, 1983).

Second, as mentioned above, the services effort recognizes with James Coleman (1994) that the "social capital" that schools find in their surrounding neighborhoods, and among the parents of their pupils, may require considerable bolstering. Schools are far more effective for children from strong family backgrounds. Thus, in a role the public schools have become increasingly uncomfortable in undertaking following the Progressive Era, the modern perspective now returns to a full appreciation of "outreach" in education. If indeed there is a network of learning environments from home to school to community, service-coordination advocates argue, it may be necessary for public education to move beyond the legendary "four-walls" of the school building in order to create some of the social capital that is requisite to their own success. To do so, adds James Comer (1980, 1984, 1988), the overall "development" of

children, and not just the narrowly academic achievement of children, must become the central perspective of the school.

Finally, in sharp contrast to the ecology and "wholeness" of the coordinated services effort, is the ongoing system for the delivery of services to children and families that is often heavily fragmented. Not only are services for children and families seldom located in convenient proximity, but they have also tended to grow over the years into very separate professional fiefdoms and "categories" of assistance—with little commonality of procedure or purpose, and with little that delivers mutually reinforcing messages to a community clientele. To those persons who advocate coordinated services, the sense is that multiple family needs cannot be addressed piecemeal, and therefore a serious strategy of assistance must attempt to bring the differing service frameworks and their specialized professionals cooperatively to bear upon common problems (Kirst & Kelley, 1995).

Together, these three perspectives (i.e., a new sense of "ecology," a recognition of the need to build social capital, and a halt to fragmentation in service delivery) frame an ongoing implementation struggle for the coordinated-services movement. Much of the focus of program implementation thus far has been on the last of these values (fragmentation-removal)—toward a new integration and linking of children and family services around a shared clientele. However, despite the excellent assistance of a number of well-crafted handbooks for practitioners, evidence of successful service integration has not been abundant (Crowson & Boyd, 1993; White & Wehlage, 1995).

As a major reason, we find that the deeply rooted political and organizational constraints surrounding service coordination are substantial. Differing professional cultures and incentive systems are brought into uneasy contact; shared information around a common clientele finds a struggle against traditions of professional autonomy and "turf;" categorical funding and categorical rules/regulations do not commingle well; and professional languages which are separately equipped to discuss the educational or health or welfare needs of children are not very comfortable with "the whole" (Crowson & Boyd, 1993, 1996; Smrekar, 1996). Additional constraints derive from the short-term foundation-sponsored funding of much experimentation to date—a source of pressure for reform that is not ideally suited to lasting, deeply structured changes in organizational and professional behavior (Smrekar, 1996; also Orland & Foley, 1996).

Interestingly, as the coordinated-services effort has developed, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the fragmentation-removal aspect of the movement may be the least of

its significant elements. Possibly far more important are the implications for schools and communities that have developed out of the "ecology" and "social capital" assumptions. Indeed, the services phenomenon has helped to identify some watershed considerations of school-community relations in educational reform at a time when the popular acceptance and the very "legitimacy" of public education in the nation may be in substantial decline (Crowson, Boyd, & Mawhinney, 1996). The family and children's services idea has added fuel to a long, unresolved debate about the separate roles of parents and professionals, the roles of professionals other than educators in children's development, the roles of the lay citizenry in school programs and governance, and even the overall institutional role of the school in relation to the modern welfare state (Cibulka, 1996).

It would be our observation, in agreement with White and Wehlage (1995), that the test for community services is far less in its success in coordinating resources and services than in reshaping the priorities and practices of schools toward a much closer understanding of, and even partnership with, the family and neighborhood clientele. Furthermore, the test for community services may be far less its case-by-case distribution of added assistance to individual families and children than its capacity for "fostering networks of interdependency within and among families, neighborhoods, and the larger community"—that is, in firmly re-establishing learning connections and in building social capital (White & Wehlage, 1995, p. 35).

All in all, however, the movement to coordinate children's services (with direct or indirect linkages to the public schools) remains a nascent and early developing phenomenon. The "grassroots" nature of most experimentation to date ensures widespread variation in scope and procedure. Projects "gone out of business" are as common as projects newly in business. State action to encourage and organize service-coordination is prominent in some regions, little to be seen in others. The development of national organizations and forums for professional development in this field is embryonic; and there has been little progress toward a large-scale, systematic collection of data around the "outcomes" these programs can produce (Driscoll, Boyd, & Crowson, 1996b; Orland & Foley, 1996).

Community Development Initiatives

Thus, it remains to be seen whether the coordinated services movement will manage to establish "staying power" among the array of strategies for urban school reform. Meanwhile, an alternative paradigm, focusing on community development rather than delivery of services is gaining considerable attention. While the local school can be considered the logical and indeed

most well-situated place of deployment for community outreach, there are others who argue that our beleagured and much-criticized schools should not be burdened with these additional duties. Some critics continue to raise questions about the appropriateness and legitimacy of "social roles" for the schools beyond the 3R's. The schools and their professionals, it is claimed, should be left alone to teach.

Other critics see the local school as a very poor choice for leadership in community development—for the city school simply does not have a very glorious track record of "openness" to its families and its neighborhood. Finally, critics note that the central notion of "service" to a community fails to address appropriately the more deep-seated problems of urban development. Many of these critics urge a more focused attention to broader, neighborhood-revitalization strategies, tackling economic and empowerment issues as a first priority (with spill-over into but less direct dependence on the schools) (Cohen, 1995).

The community development (or neighborhood revitalization) strategy derives much of its strength, first, in the sense of a "larger picture" than that which typically drives the coordinated services movement. The notion that the neighborhood is a reflection of leadership and regeneration/renewal citywide is a key part of this strategy (Judd & Parkinson, 1990; Gittell, 1992). A parallel idea, offered by Weeres and Kerchner (1996), goes well beyond the local school and its array of services to a picture of public education as a fundamental part of the "basic industry" of the city. Schools, as much as other institutions, help to heal cities, and help to serve as agencies of cities' civic and economic growth.

Second, the community development perspective offers a further (and a deeper) broadening of already much-widened understandings of child development. Closely linked to a fairly narrow notion of "social capital," the coordinated services movement places "care" (e.g., health care, family assistance) and education hand-in-hand developmentally (Comer, 1980, 1984, 1988). The neighborhood revitalization strategy recognizes, however, that a child's development is also much affected by broad-based community conditions and investments that go beyond "care," such as housing quality, parks and recreation opportunities, employment and training, law enforcement, etc. (see Haveman & Wolfe, 1994). Typically, however, the size of the public investment in a child-development infrastructure in inner-city neighborhoods falls far short of comparable investments in suburbia (Littell & Wynn, 1989).

Third, there is an up-from-the-community sense to much of the neighborhood-revitalization movement that has yet to penetrate deeply into coordinated services experimentation. The language of empowerment, enterprise, self-reliance, indigenous

leadership, entrepreneuralism, mobilization, and restoration is to be found throughout discussions of community development (Garr, 1995). Typically, this is not the language of professional social-services providers, including educators, who are likely to find comfort in a discussion of "meeting needs" above "enterprise." In addition, institutions such as neighborhood churches, local banks, welfare rights groups, citizens' action councils, food banks, and community youth centers have been much more likely to date to serve as cooperating partners in revitalization rather than service coordination.

The community revitalization approach has received much thrust from the July, 1995 publication of President Clinton's National Urban Policy Report. Entitled "Empowerment: A New Covenant with America's Communities," (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1995) this report offers a "Community Empowerment Agenda," focusing on family self-sufficiency and independence through employment, a renewed encouragement of private investment in urban communities, and a locally or grassroots-driven strategy of action.

For the more severely distressed of the nation's urban communities, the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) initiative is attempting to generate "strategies for change that combine innovative economic development initiatives with essential human capital and community building investments" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1995, p. 44). The heaviest stress is placed on a transition into employment, job training, private and public partnerships in the stimulation of economic activity, and such quality-of-life improvements as better housing and anti-crime initiatives. The focus is also heavily on self-determination above governmental largesse. Consolidated services are by no means efforts ruled out in the President's Report; indeed, integrated human services which link health, education, family assistance, and job training are specifically mentioned and encouraged.

The idea of an "Enterprise Zone" is generally credited to a 1978 speech by Sir Geoffrey Howe, a member of the British House of Commons (Butler, 1991). From the start, the focus has been on the economic improvement of poor neighborhoods through a strengthening of indigenous community institutions, through investment incentives and the encouragement of public-private partnerships, and through a preference for market forces above direct governmental intervention (Green, 1991).

There is considerable appeal in the low-regulation, block-grant, and bottom-up strategies of the enterprise concept—especially in contrast to the earlier, over-federalized methods of the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) Program for inner-city economic development (Watson, Heilman, & Montjoy, 1994; Halpern, 1995). Nevertheless, many unresolved questions

remain about the combination of public and private roles in neighborhood revitalization. As Green and Brintnall (1994) note, there is not a great deal of potentiality for private investment now to be found in many distressed communities. Simultaneously, most of the key resources in the lives of community residents continue to derive from public sources (e.g., transfer payments, public education, police protection, public health, public transportation).

Indeed, those continuing to focus on the schools in communities-children-families initiatives point to the omnipresence of the local school as a significant element. The public school is one of the last, ongoing, stable institutions remaining in many distressed neighborhoods. It is an institution of substance, with a long tradition of its own in the difficult game of "development."

Services and Development: A Comparison

Outreach to children and families through, for example, assisting in the growth of social capital, bringing together the forces necessary to improve learning, bridging the gap between parents and educators is by no means incompatible with notions of community revitalization through enterprise and empowerment. Nevertheless, there are basic ingredients that differ, including key assumptions regarding (a) the utility of indirect stimuli to economic development versus the direct provision of services, (b) the central importance of job growth and business formation versus meeting very basic welfare needs of poor families and their children, and (c) the core value of unleashing a community's entrepreneurial spirit (Craig & Mayo, 1995) versus that of finding a partnership between parents and their schools.

Linked with these differing assumptions (holding at bay explorations of accommodations between them) are some very deep dilemmas surrounding neighborhood revitalization. On the one hand, observes Robert Halpern (1995, p. 12), the history of neighborhood development "reflects a persistent tendency to ask those with the fewest capital, institutional, and human resources to draw on those resources to better their lives." The "basic stuff" of most inner-city neighborhoods is owned by people outside the neighborhood giving rise to the question, "How can market mechanisms be made to work in communities that are outside the market?" (Halpern, 1995, p. 12). On the other hand, continues Halpern (1995, p. 15), the public schools rail against inattentive parents, drug-infested streets, and poorly motivated students, while failing to realize that "children will not struggle to succeed in school if there seems to be no purpose for doing so." A lack of individual opportunity has close connections with market-borne sources of neighborhood abandonment, dilapidation, and despair.

Arguably, there is also a dilemma of importance, with deep historical roots, behind the "service" approach to revitalization versus the "market" approach. Theda Skocpol (1992) writes that a significant element in the progressive-era beginnings of children and family services was the concerted effort to protect the poor (particularly women and children) from the ravages of the market. Interpreted by Skocpol (1992) as a "maternalism" in the development of service institutions, the intent was to push for "healthy" homes and neighborhoods, what's "good" for families and children, and a renewal of the "social" realm of life—as a balance against the industrial. A residue of distrust against the market among human service professionals, has not been lost today (Hasenfeld, 1992)—perhaps for good reason, as it is often the marginal employer paying and working employees under sweatshop conditions who locates in the inner city. Protecting families from the worst aspects of the market may currently be no less salient in community development than at the turn of the century. Nevertheless, the core values that Skocpol (1992) finds in human service organizations square poorly with a new language under the EZ/EC construct of self-reliance, incentives-to-labor, subsidized local development, and tax-based incentives for business.

A third dilemma for schools and communities (whether developing, serving, or both) is to be found in differing interpretations of and assumptions about "empowerment." Despite a nineteenth-century tradition of community-centeredness, the twentieth-century legacy has more aptly been one of "disconnection" between schools and their communities (Crowson, 1992). A need to preserve strong norms of professional discretion against private-regarding parents and narrow-minded communities was a theme as early as 1932 in the work of Willard Waller; and generations of school administrators in the U.S. have been trained around the dangers of losing managerial control to the "politics" of their communities (Iannaccone, 1989). Curiously, parental involvement has long been recognized as essential to successful learning for children, but this recognition has failed over time to translate into a full partnership between parents and schools (Sarason, 1995). Efforts to truly involve and empower parents in public education are of very recent vintage, and are still (as in Chicago school reform) regarded as "experimental."

The legacy may be a bit better in the arena of community development. Government (particularly federal) initiatives have also struggled mightily in this century with issues of participation and empowerment. Indeed, from "urban renewal" in the 1950s, to "maximum feasible participation" in the 1960s, to the Model Cities and Community Development Corporations of more recent times—the issue of participation (let alone empowerment) has remained largely unresolved (Halpern, 1995). Nevertheless, an emergence of "direct action

strategies" (through the interventions of such community organizers as Saul Alinsky) has left at least a bit of residue in many cities of neighborhood mobilization and community organization (Halpern, 1995; Wiewel & Gills, 1995). Already existing community organizations are considered important resources on which to build the Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (Gittell, Bockmeyer, Lindsay, & Newman, 1996).

However, while empowerment for educators can be described as a tradition of power-over by professionals, the descriptors best applied to "Empowerment Zone" thinking are no clearer, or more encouraging. There is an economic sense of empowerment to the movement and a political sense—with a dilemma between them of "fit." On an economic level, President Clinton's Urban Policy Report describes a community empowerment agenda as a way for the federal government to create opportunity in the private sector, empowering people and firms to assume local and community responsibility (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1995, p. 48). Mayo and Craig (1995, p. 4) note, in explanation, that this agenda is part of a larger philosophy to "roll back the state," to reduce spending on social welfare and "promote alternative solutions based on the market." The key assumption is that market forces in poor neighborhoods can indeed replace the power and the resources from publicly supplied services and governmental "largesse."

On the political side, Empowerment Zone initiatives have already encountered an array of unresolved tensions between the city, community organizations, private-sector developers, and "the people." In a review of efforts underway thus far in six cities, for example, a team led by Marilyn Gittell concluded that the program has:

> ...forced development interests to divert their gaze from the central business district (CBD) to low-income neighborhoods, but it did not force a shift in power to the community level. While the new EZ was to create partnerships between private enterprise and neighborhoods, significant relationships have yet to emerge. (Gittell et al., 1996, p. 4).

In short, in what is hoped to be a "comprehensive" solution to community revitalization (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1995), the central power-related dilemma is likely to continue to be the one highlighted by White and Wehlage (1995), in their study of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's "New Futures" experimentation. These authors noted, "the major

issue is how to get whole communities, the haves and the have-nots, to engage in the difficult task of community development" (White & Wehlage, 1995, p. 37).

Issues and Implications in Community Revitalization for the Development and Learning of Children

Differing assumptions about (a) the power of the market against provisions of needed services; (b) job-creation against a strengthening of social capital; (c) the "entrepreneurial spirit" of a community against the "caring" spirit of a community; and (d) a private-sector emphasis against the public sector reaffirmed are sure to lead to significant difficulties in a more comprehensive partnering between the public schools and "developer" interests. Similarly, differing historical traditions, suspicions, and accomplishments around participation and empowerment may create deep cleavages between partnering organizations—cleavages which develop out of conflicting values regarding the saliency and legitimacy of truly empowering community residents, of working with all neighborhood institutions (e.g., churches, clubs, retail shops, community organizations), and trusting the legitimacy of varying neighborhood leaders (e.g., local organizers, ward politicians, gang chiefs).

In an initiative completely unknown to the strategies of most educators, for example, the state of Tennessee has recently undertaken an "Individual Development Account (IDA) demonstration program." Participants in this pilot program can "deposit money into an escrow account which can be matched up to $5,000 without affecting their AFDC or Food Stamp benefits...The IDA funds are restricted for use as a down-payment on a house, to start or expand a business venture, or to obtain further education for the individual or their family" (Tennessee Network for Community Economic Development, 1996). From an educator's perspective, such an indirect approach to assistance leaves critical questions unanswered about the welfare and treatment of children, family commitments to education and lifestyle improvement, and the value of learning against the values of materialism and home-ownership. From a "developer's" perspective, the simple accumulation of and control over an "asset" for a family is, in itself, "the primary distinguishing factor" and a central signal of a move out of poverty (Tennessee Network for Community Economic Development, 1996).

Despite many such differences of value and assumption, there may be much for the public schools to gain from a deeper understanding of and an involvement in the EZ/EC initiative. Alternatively, there should be much for EZ/EC promoters to learn from public school traditions of service concentrated on the development and learning of children. We offer three major observations.

Enterprise Schooling

It may now behoove the public school to go beyond its traditions of child development, toward a broader role as a full player in the much larger, full-scale economic, social, human capital, and pedagogical development of its community. More than simply a "service" outreach, the relationship under this reform might now have to do with considerably larger questions of community support from the institution of the school to the remainder of a network of both public and private investors. The most important consequence of this change could be the fundamental alteration of the direction of interaction between schools and their neighborhood environments. In terms used by Gary Wehlage and colleagues (1989), the newly reformed role for the school could be its activation as a "community of support" for the families and children in its orbit.

"Support" is a term long used by educators to describe the responsibilities of parents and the community (particularly financial support) that are required for schools to do their jobs effectively. Non-supportive parents and an inadequately supportive community are among the most common teacher and administrator complaints. Seldom, however, has the profession adequately addressed the degree to which the school can be credited with and held responsible for its support of the home and the larger community.

An extended role for the school, in full support of and supported by its environment touches upon and potentially alters some deeply-rooted structural features in public education. At a theoretical level, the notion of the school as an exercise in supportive outreach to its community has already found considerable strength in the idea of "social capital," as noted earlier. It finds added strength in a new sense of the school as a central source of its own brand of societal "investment" in families, communities, and the development of children (Hawley, 1990; Kagan, 1989; Kagan & Neville, 1993).

As a cooperating "investor," the local school could maintain its 3R's emphasis while cooperating extensively with community-development agencies and other centers of family services. The school can also be a fully active player in a developmentally oriented network of public/private community institutions (from banks, to churches, to employers, to "activists"). Surprisingly, despite the saliency of the school-to-work transition, the school's own role as an employer and purchaser of goods/services has been undervalued. In considering the "products," even the most narrowly defined school contributes to its community (e.g., lunches, health examinations, school-age day care), and considering the school's own accumulation of

professionally credentialed "social capital," there has tended to be only a minimal understanding among educators that they too are part of an enterprise.

Yet what has yet to be explored at all in educational reform to date is the possible transition of the public school, under the EZ/EC initiative, from a full-service institution into an "enterprise school." An enterprise school might be expected to join an array of other neighborhood and city institutions in a much-larger-than-services and a more-substantive-than-preparation participation in the development and regeneration of the school's neighborhood environment. Services to children and families should be included, to be sure, but far more fulsome and well-planned relationships may also be necessary with neighborhood churches, businesses, community organizers, housing authorities, the parks department, the police, youth organizations, and the city at large.

Empowerment Dilemmas

Empowerment has been much more clearly recognized in the shaping of enterprise strategies than in children's services planning. This is not very difficult to understand. A provision of added professional services to families and communities can very easily proceed (and usually does) with only minimal involvement of the "client" in decision processes. Most of the key issues in service coordination (e.g., questions of professional turf, control of/confidentiality in client information, overcoming fragmented rules structures, co-mingling of resources) are issues of traditional professions-dominated service delivery (Crowson and Boyd, 1993). The struggle between the professionals-know-best (for the good of the client) and the client-knows-best (for his or her own good) constitutes an unresolved battle of values, with deep historical roots in the progressive-era origins of the family-services and school-outreach constructs.

In development-language terms, there has been a cost to this approach. Much of the focus in the children's services movement has been on the supply of added services to a presumably needy community. Generally, much less attention has been paid to the community's demand for assistance. From the supply side, an array of new options for assistance, added professional expertise, and often some connecting personnel (e.g., family advocates) are made available to a targeted clientele. From the demand side, the new service offerings may be somewhat less important than a sense of welcome, a partnership in development, a celebration of community, a sense of need from the clients' perspectives, and communication to families that they are shareholders in an enterprise with the school and its professionals.

The indirectness of economic development is necessarily demand-oriented. To economists, a supply (of services) approach may create a false demand. White and Wehlage (1995, p. 29) concluded from their examination of the New Futures initiatives in collaborative services that one key impediment to success was "the disjuncture between a specific collaborative policy and the actual social conditions affecting at-risk youth," where "disjuncture...describes bad policy, usually the result of inadequate and inaccurate knowledge about conditions in the communities being served."

Alternatively, EZ/EC strategies may be seriously weakened if there is no effective liaison with service professionals and particularly with the public schools. There is, to be sure, a clear recognition of this among the advocates of community revitalization—that the local schools must be central players. Indeed, in federal grant approval for education there is now steadily increasing attention to additional technology allocations, programming incentives (e.g., priority funding for the gifted, bilingual education, parent training, etc.), and the encouragement of community programs/services (including service integration) within designated Empowerment Zones (Cohen, 1996). The school-to-work transition, job-readiness training, skills training, courses in entrepreneurship and individual self-sufficiency, after-school programs, and an array of opportunities for family counseling are among the further ingredients in economic development and Empowerment Zone funding to date (Cohen, 1996).

Nevertheless, the emerging notion that neighborhood initiatives should proceed broadly and holistically on many fronts simultaneously (including, for example, education and human services, job creation, community development, community safety, and improved physical surroundings), encounters an organizational environment that has given very little thought as to how thoroughly and greatly institutional reform may be necessary if community regeneration is to occur.

There is an initial question of "mix" to be resolved. In coordinated-services experimentation, it has been discovered that educators do not partner easily with other professionals (Crowson & Boyd, 1993). But there is at least an overall professional aura to most of the health and family-services add-ons to the work of the schools. For educators to collaborate well with non-professionals and with economic and political "activistists" is to ask for a sea-change in perspective and outlook. Indeed, it is to ask (as James Comer does) for a movement that proceeds away somewhat from the individual and small-group focus of educators and other professionals toward collaboration in "societal change for the benefit of the whole

community" (Comer, Haynes, Joyner, & Ben-Avie, 1996, p. 39). Such a change in perspective is far beyond the experience and training of most educators, who struggle quite enough with the notion of "the whole child," not to mention the whole community.

There is a second question as to just what it means to "empower." Educators and most service professionals are quite comfortable with a notion of empowerment as follows: "Knowledge is a key element of empowerment and professionals can provide family members with current information about..." (Cohen & Lavach, 1995, p. 271). To go beyond the distribution of knowledge, some training, and providing access to added services toward co-equal participation in governance and in development (of the schools as well as the neighborhood) is to go beyond the comfort level for most educators. And for good reason. Coalitions can form, and opposition can develop. Special favors and "jobs for friends" can become a greater part of the neighborhood currency. Elected politicians may enter the neighborhood "fray," and "old wounds" between neighborhoods and the city at large may be reopened (part of what Grimshaw [1992] labels the "bitter fruit" of city politics). It can become, note Wiewel and Gills (1995, p. 132), the "price of partnership."

Finally, there is the question of major intent. To James Comer, the focus of attention should be on the involvement of "children, families, educators, and community groups and agencies...as full partners in the educational enterprise" (Comer et al., 1996, p. 53). The development and learning of children should be the primary target of "the whole village." To other persons interested in the EZ/EC initiative, the larger economic development of the neighborhood is the better focus. To be sure, a comprehensive community development strategy should include the schools (Wiewel & Gills, 1995); but the schools (despite serving as "anchor institutions" in their neighborhoods) are not central—and indeed the enhanced development/learning of children is regarded as an expected by-product of employed families and improved living conditions rather than as an end-in-itself (Craig & Mayo, 1995; Gittell et al., 1996). Unless the notion of "enterprise" can more fully encompass the public school and the development of children, the institutional power of public schooling may be moved more and more to the periphery in urban regeneration.

Cultures and Markets

In a movement now regarded as originally focused wrongheadedly upon family and neighborhood deficits rather than strengths, urban educators have for decades had a firm regard for "the cultural" in their work. With a new-found power of fairly substantial federal

involvement behind them, the public schools took seriously the 1960's-era terms "culturally deprived" and "culturally disadvantaged." The terminology of that time was biased and prejudiced, and conveyed a lack of rather than a full understanding of culture. But the movement did at least recognize that the values and life ways of home, family, and neighborhood are vital to successful schooling.

Translated from a perspective on the linkages between families and schools into a "model" of economic development, the cultural approach finds itself to be at odds with much of the thinking behind the EZ/EC initiative. As outlined by Meridith Ramsay (1996), the difference is between a "market model" of development and "urban regime theory." The central hypothesis of the indirect assistance and incentives-based EZ/EC initiative is that enriched individual opportunity will grow out of inducements to invest in distressed communities (thereby creating jobs and business opportunities), if combined with incentives for community organizations and residents to participate in their own neighborhood development (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1995). As an alternative, urban regime theory hypothesizes that economic restructuring may be much more heavily shaped by the cultural context of each neighborhood (e.g., local history, social structures, cultural values, long established power relations) than by independent "market" forces (Ramsay, 1996).

The importance of considering culture as well as market in community development is explained by Ramsay (1996, p. 123) as a central problem of equilibrium. Market solutions assume that people will respond to incentives, an awareness of opportunities will indeed produce movements toward them, a distressed community desires economic improvement, participation will develop, and that which is supplied by a market will serve to create demand (e.g., for jobs). However, among populations that have long been excluded from and are longtime non-participants in the traditional economy, such assumptions may be less than fully warranted. The public schools tend to know well the difficulties in securing parent participation, in bridging "discontinuities" between the cultures of home and school (Ogbu, 1974), and in opening new horizons to a defeat-hardened clientele. James Comer put it succinctly in observing that one of the tough, early problems in community development is learning how to reduce the use of those structures and services which "maintain the status quo" (see Emmons, Comer, & Haynes, 1996, p. 35).

On the other hand, if the schools bring a better understanding of culture to the economic development table, the EZ/EC initiative brings a better understanding of choice and investment. Despite many discussions of improved investments in the "social capital" of their

neighborhoods, the public schools have had difficulty understanding the notion that they serve many constituencies beyond area students and their families. The schools are "embedded institutions," observes Alan Peshkin (1995), with many constituent interests among (and benefits offered to) the law enforcement community, the business community, religious and ethnic communities, the media, those who are concerned with health and welfare issues, city government, the military, and on and on. Few educators, concludes Peshkin (1995, p. 256), have received "training that helps them understand the magnitude and meaning of institutional embeddedness and how to find opportunity in its profusion of constituent voices."

In a similar vein, the public schools have traditionally failed to pay much attention to the incentive structures that surround these differing constituencies, incentive structures that can vitally affect their own success. To be sure, urban educators know full well that gang associations are often in extremely powerful competition with the school's curriculum. Educators are also deeply aware of the days and hours of instruction lost among older children who are kept at home to care for younger siblings, and of the costs in instructional time lost to inadequate family care and poor health. However, the larger incentive structure of the surrounding community is seldom given adequate notice—a problem that Halpern (1995, p. 214) aptly describes as follows:

> A child's motivation to stick with schooling depends in part on evidence in his or her community environment that doing so will pay off economically. It will be difficult to convince a child to stick with schooling if no one that child knows has a regular job.

Summary and Conclusion

In brief summary, we note that turn-of-the-century dilemmas in urban regeneration are coming into sharply renewed focus as the current century closes. Should a professionalized delivery of (essential to learning and development) services to families be emphasized over strategies for employment and impacts-upon-families effects upon economically revitalized neighborhoods? Does a rediscovery of incentives and "the market" offer new hope for urban America, at a time of apparently widespread disaffection with service bureaucracies and a transfer-paying government? Have the professionally defined needs of children and families lost the utility that can derive from a clearer communication of demand? Is an improvement in the welfare, learning, and development of children an acceptable and likely spin-off from an

improved local economy, or does neighborhood revitalization spin off more effectively from the "social capital" flowing out of service-rich schooling?

These questions should produce "both" rather than "either-or" responses. Yet current initiatives in revitalizing urban America are in serious danger of moving in an either-or direction. A drive toward the coordination of learning-related services for children and families recognizes the power of outreach beyond the school into the development of social capital, and recognizes important linkages between the classroom and family/child welfare. However, the movement to coordinate children's services has had difficulty thus far in demonstrating staying power, in overcoming the fragmentation and bureaucratization it was meant to address, and in effectively connecting to its community clientele. Alternatively, the "enterprise" approach to neighborhood revitalization is more broad-based, is wrapped within vital economic incentives, and is more in tune with neighborhood social conditions or demand. The EZ/EC initiative, however, is also relatively untested and is heavily biased toward market solutions in economies that have few market allegiances and traditions.

The importance of bringing together the centuries-old traditions of service and market has now been well recognized by many urban politicians. Mayors of many of the nation's cities "watched from the sidelines as the troubles in their local schools mounted," notes Hendrie (1996, p. 1). Currently, ranging from direct takeover, to standards setting, to personnel replacement actions, to more active levels of "support" for the schools—the trend is decidedly away from the sidelines, toward mayoral intervention in public education. "Too many problems in the cities," observes the director of the Council of the Great City Schools, "are overlapping" (Hendrie, 1996, p. 18).

It is a tall order to suggest that the public schools, beleaguered as they are, should begin to play a more active role as partners in the empowerment and economic revitalization of their communities. Yet it is a notion well worth further exploration and analysis. Ideas of importance here are the observations that: (a) added assistance to families and children, while vital, can fail to "reach" if the full involvement of parents and the community is not a simultaneous goal; (b) the local school should be recognized as a part of the "basic industry" of the city, with economic and community-development responsibilities that go well beyond mere "delivery" of services; and (c) powerful neighborhood revitalization strategies should proceed from the realization that in poor neighborhoods "physical, economic, and social, individual and collective, adult and child well-being are all interconnected" (Halpern, 1995, p. 198). More than full-service, the local school might well be refashioned conceptually into an "enterprise school."

Just what would this mean for school reform? It is already recognizably difficult to alter local schools—institutions which do have a service orientation—toward a community outreach far beyond the narrowly educational. The added issues to be addressed in contemplating a further transition toward enterprise schools in urban neighborhoods would go well beyond localized focuses on the "developmental" needs of children and families that have usually been the aim of coordinated-services efforts. Partnering with revitalization forces (as well as family welfare forces) in a neighborhood, might mean tackling issues of economic incentives; employment options and training; a neighborhood's attractiveness to investment capital; adult education alongside children's education; and partnering with such economic institutions as banks, retail businesses, insurers, and property owners—those persons whom educators tend to regard as "just out to make money."

It could take a serious rethinking of school, community, and family connections, as James Cibulka (1996, p. 429) has argued recently, with a "transformation" (not just reform) of the schools, and "a new approach to the welfare state." Similarly, in clearly descriptive language, Smrekar (1996, p. 31) concludes that the new economic revitalization and empowerment press in urban education should:

> ...force us to penetrate the veneer that has helped to slide the issue of children's services to the center of the policy table on the naïve and narrow assumption that integrated services will provide more economic and efficient systems for families...Our responses require us to move beyond the erratic and irregular child-saving impulses that have marked earlier actions, to efforts that understand the complexity of the lives of children and their families and the persistence of the dandelions that grow beside them.

If the development and learning of children in urban neighborhoods are to be seriously and conscientiously reformed, the economic regeneration of the city itself, a renewal of economic hope in the lives of families, and a much more thoroughgoing attention to urban "dandelions" will need to receive top national priority.

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The Laboratory for Student Success

The Laboratory for Student Success (LSS) is one of ten regional educational laboratories in the nation funded by the U.S. Department of Education to revitalize and reform educational practice in the service of children and youth.

The mission of the Laboratory for Student Success is to strengthen the capacity of the mid-Atlantic region to enact and sustain lasting systemic educational reform through collaborative programs of applied research and development and services to the field. In particular, the LSS facilitates the transformation of research-based knowledge into useful tools that can be readily integrated into the educational reform process both regionally and nationally. To ensure a high degree of effectiveness, the work of the LSS is continuously refined based on feedback from the field on what is working and what is needed in improving educational practice.

The ultimate goal of the LSS is the formation of a connected system of schools, parents, community agencies, professional organizations, and institutions of higher education that serves the needs of all students and is linked with a high-tech national system for information exchange. In particular, the aim is to bring researchers and research-based knowledge into synergistic coordination with other efforts for educational improvement led by field-based professionals.

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